



TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVES ON CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY

Pooja Sharma

PhD Research Scholar, CIE, University of Delhi, Delhi, India.

ABSTRACT

We live in 21st century where we still focus on inclusive education except this we should have to focus on quality education. Inclusive education means to include, Educate, to provide equal opportunity to each and every individual in the schools. The aim of the study is to explore the perceptions among teachers regarding inclusive education. For the achievement of this goal the researcher selected five teachers and one special educator from a Formal Primary School of one district in Himachal Pradesh. Observation and Structured Interview methods were used as the data collection tools. The findings revealed that teachers are not aware about the notion of inclusive education, they have lack knowledge regarding problems of children with disabilities, lack in the pre services and in services regarding these students. The Implications of the study imply that it would be helpful for the regular teachers and special educators because when the teacher can understand the different needs of the special needed students then it is easy to provide learning outcomes at the higher level.

KEY WORDS: Inclusive education, Children with disabilities, Teachers concern about inclusive education.

BACKDROP OF THE STUDY:

The concept of inclusive education and concerns of teachers about inclusion has become important in India. This notion takes attention in national as well as international debates also. Usually, the evolution of inclusive education has been emerged from Salamanca conference which was held in Spain. This conference recommended that all students should be given education regardless of any difference that may be in the form of caste, class, physical difference, sex, culture and background of the individual. So, for the giving importance of inclusive education enormous numbers of provisions and policies have been framed and recommended guidelines on the accommodations of students with disabilities particularly in the Schools. For the accommodations and retention teachers play an important part in the holistic development of students. The focus of this paper is on students with disabilities hence for training, attentiveness and preparation of teachers' number of provisions have been intended to fulfil its aim in India.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

The concepts of Inclusive education and integrated education are used interchangeably reported in several studies including (Julka, 2005 & Singal, 2005). When we talk about the background of inclusive education, the education for children with special needs has gone through three stages. Initially, the separation of children from the formal system of education was known as segregated type of education where no provision of equal education was provided. According to Advani, (2002), until the 1970s, the policy encouraged segregation. Most educators believed that children with physical, sensory, or intellectual disabilities were so different and they could not participate in the activities of a common school. Students with special needs do not reach the level of academic performance of regular students, since their behavioral or emotional problems interfere with their abilities to use their cognitive skills at an optimal level reported in several studies such as Scruggs & Mastropieri, (1986); Epstein et al., (1989); Trout et al., (2003). The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) (2000), brought out by the NCERT, recommended that inclusive schools for all without specific reference to pupils with special education. It is understood that the placement of children with special needs is in mainstream classrooms with the aim of aids and appliances. And also, the focus was given on special training for the teacher on how to deal with students with special needs in the school.

We live in a nation of cultural diversity and commitment to democratic values and well being of all. There are people from different religions who live together where the educational aims are to educate every child irrespective of the caste, creed, color, religion, and even children with special needs of India. According to National Curriculum Framework (2005), 37 percent of people in India lack literacy skills, about 53 percent drop out at the elementary stage. Then introduction of the Right to Education Act (2009), every child has a right to full-time elementary education of suitable and equitable quality in formal school setting. It is clear that this legislation mandates the schools to follow a zero rejection policy. Zero rejection policy means every child must be enrolled in the formal system of education.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The need for special educators in school was also introduced in the policies to educate such special needs students.

Donoghue & Chalmers (2000), also found the same results from his study that the teachers have no special training regarding disabled students in regular

school. According to the investigation of Elzein (2009), was a contextual analysis from the guardians' viewpoint. It demonstrates that there is an inspirational perspective towards consideration by the guardians of youngsters in the 2 schools. Concerning the kind of incorporation, respondents showed an uplifting outlook toward the asset of resource room as a sort of consideration. Regarding acknowledgment of kids with uncommon requirements in the distinctive evaluation levels, respondents mirror an uplifting perspective towards incorporation in all evaluation levels with some alert in upper-level classes.

According to Arrah (2013), teachers have a positive perception of students with special education needs. But, it has been reported that the teacher faces lack of support from the school administrator. Insufficient resources and lack of skills in working with students with special education needs are highlighted by the author from the findings of his study. He further mentioned that there were no trained special education teachers in the five schools surveyed.

From the study of Bhatnagar & Das (2014) this type of study was conducted first time in India that explored teachers' attitudes regarding inclusive education using qualitative research methods. A Semi-structured interview tool was used by the researcher. It was discovered that regular school teachers in Delhi generally had positive attitudes toward educating students with disabilities. A number of themes emerged from focus groups and semi-structured interviews including "a healthy process to integrate the whole society," "a step toward equality," and "diversity in education," among others. The study paints a careful picture of inclusive education in India.

Singh and Agarwal (2015) conducted a study to understand the problems and Prospects of Inclusive Education in the Indian context. From the findings of the study, he concluded that teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education could be formed and developed in the context of an educational system that can provide some specific conditions in order to have a good practice in this field. Those conditions refer to a restructure of the curricula, more help from support teachers, and more time for preparing the educational activities, decreasing the number of students in one class, creating and developing opportunities for interactive partnerships between teachers, students, support teachers and parents and so on.

From the review of literature be understood that there are significant issues and challenges which hampers the aim of schemes and policies that are made to manage, educate and enhance abilities in the so-called children with special need or disabilities through their enrolment in the formal school of education. Hence, based on the contradictory findings between understanding of the principles of inclusive education and empirical evidence the present study was formulated with the aim to understand the issues and challenges of inclusive education specifically with regard to the inclusion of children with special needs in the regular system of education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To uncover the challenges faced by the special educator in the inclusive school set up.
2. To study the challenges faced by the teachers while teaching special needs students in the classroom.

METHODOLOGY:

It is a qualitative type of study.

Design:

The Case study method was used in this research because case study could provide the means for qualitative data - gathering and School were considered as a case.

Sample:

This study was confined to one primary school out of 74 schools in the Rait block of Kangra District, where there is highest number of disabled students according to the official record of Rait Block Resource Centre office of Education.

Tools:

Semi-structured interview technique was used for data collection. Several questions such as: when did you know about inclusive education, first time interaction of children with special needed students, what kinds of resources government provides you regarding these students, attend any in-service training regarding these children, maintain any diary or report regarding these students, do you consider your school perfect for effectiveness of inclusive education?

RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

Through the observation and recorded interviews interaction with special needed students and teachers the result of the study is: Challenges faced by the children with special needs in class rooms and Challenges faced by the teachers when they accommodate children with disability in classrooms.

Teachers concerns about inclusive education:

- 1. Lack of pre service and in service training:** The teachers didn't have any pre service. There is no provision of in service training regarding these students. The Government not provides any training to teachers especially children with special needed students. All teachers except special educator said that they don't give any such training program regarding these students.
- 2. Lack of knowledge about special needed students:** The regular teachers, at all levels, lack basic awareness about children with disabilities. During interaction time teachers use "physically handicapped", "Ortho", and "mentally retarded" terms in their interviews. The same result has been out in the study of Unianu, (2012), that Teachers have their own socially and culturally constructed notions about certain obvious disabilities but lack scientific and educational knowledge about the disabilities such as classification, labeling, special needs and adaptations etc.
- 3. Inappropriate Curriculum:** The special educator views regarding curriculum "As per child need we frames curriculum, we don't follow any kind of curriculum. We just prepare them for do daily toiletry training independently". No provision for proper curriculum for Special needed students.
- 4. Over Burden teachers:** The special educators do not give proper time to special needed students. During interview the views of special educator "Firstly we have to train other teachers how to teach these students, secondly to maintain the data regarding these students in particular block, thirdly to call each parent to take their children's allowance. And lastly the special needed child fully dependent on special educator. The regular teachers are busy to maintain various registers and log books and they don't give any attention to special needed students.
- 5. Financial crunch:** Through the interaction with special educator and teacher it reveals that the governments expect more from special educator but not given according to their hard work. "The department told us to work out of 8 kilometers but they don't give us any T/A and don't give us any teaching learning material grant". When the special educator comes to this profession they got 7500 and after six years he gets only 8900.
- 6. Teacher's Behavior:** The trained teachers through SSA are serving as resource persons for Inclusive Education Programs. But, the other teachers have negative attitude towards the CWSN. From the transcription of interview it reveals that teachers think that such children cannot learn and they said that they create problems in the classrooms, these students create lot of irritating sounds, and other students get irritated and other students says why you teach these students, they are not capable of studying all these things. Teacher's first preference is also given to the good students. Thus, this attitude of the teachers needs to be changed for the welfare of such children.
- 7. Inappropriate proper Assessment and Evaluation:** The special educator and regular teacher evaluate the special needed students "not according to the provided curriculum and syllabus but we observe the change in child what he was and what he is present".

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY:

This study can be helpful for the teachers, special educators and parents. When teacher is able to understand the different needs of the disable children it is easy to provide learning outcomes at the higher level. The researcher will gain insight from such study in carrying out in depth research in the area of inclusive education.

Policy maker and school administrator will also gain ideas from such study to improve the ways of implementation of inclusive education at ground level.

CONCLUSION:

Teachers don't use any teaching learning material for these students for engaging these students. They just accommodate CWSN in the classroom; they don't maintain any diary for CWSN. They also face ignorance and ill-treatment from their peers. The teachers were very less orientation during pre service training and in service training also.

The special educator takes all the responsibility regarding these students which type of teaching learning style use for them, maintains of diary making, maintains of records and working on Individualized education programs etc. There is positive understanding between teachers and special educators. When regular teachers have problems about children with special needed students they discuss that issue and problems with special educator and then special educator do help them. If these challenges are taken care of, the objective of inclusion will function properly and all the stakeholders will benefit in much better way.

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